Detroit Nov. 27. 1839

My very dear Brother

I write you now (it is the third successive year that I have done so) on the day preceding our annual festival — Thanksgiving. It is appointed tomorrow in several States besides this, viz. Conn. New York New Jersey & Illinois — but here it is so little thought of & talked about that I scarce realize that this peculiar season is so near at hand. Two years ago I was with you in Boston — the intervening year in New Haven — the first of which was saddened by the recent death of my last little namesake & the severe illness of Cornelia — but the last two have passed off cheerfully & agreeably — & as many of our family circle together as could be collected in N.H — Now I am far away but I do not think I shall be forgotten at this time & I am sure that memory will for me, recall many pleasant scenes —

My last letter to you was dated Buffalo (I think) Oct. 26. & sent to the care of Mr Wheaton — yours of Sept 17. was received on the 23rd of the present month. I have been long expecting it but did not attribute its failure to any delay on your part — neither did I suppose that our Eastern friends could be in fault — but it seems that they were in a measure so — for the letter was postmarked in New York on the 30th of Oct — & in New Haven not until the 11th of Nov — no reason was assigned but as it was forwarded by brother George the delay was doubtless owing to his forgetfulness — In addition to this it had a long passage across the Lake in consequence of bad weather — so that it was almost a month in this country before it reached me — However I was most happy to receive it at last & glad to hear of your prosperous circumstances — I was rejoiced also to learn that your mind was relieved with regard to your protracted absence as connected with your situation in New York — though the result is just what I should have supposed — I should indeed have been very much surprised if those who have the direction of affairs have been willing to give up your services entirely because your return was unavoidably postponed for a few months — They must be conscious that your place could not be filled by any other — You speak of travelling — & of the "pleasant scenery you have witnessed" this tells of the long time since your letter was written — for we are now not suffering but experiencing extreme cold weather — equal indeed to the depth of winter — The 25th was an intensely cold day — the Thermometer was down to 6 degrees — our windows were curtained with frost & much ice formed in the river — It is somewhat more moderate now but yet unusually cold for the season — We are however made very comfortable in doors by stoves & a plenty of wood — in some of the rooms, & in others by grates supplied with bituminous coal from Ohio — This coal is a delightful fuel burning freely & brightly & sending forth volumes of heat — In my own little room I have nice stove in which I may have a fire at any moment — but as there is a constant fire maintained in the hall it is usually warm enough for every purpose — Perhaps I may not have the benefit of such a degree of regular & constant heat as I enjoyed last winter from my "Homestead" — but I do not see why I cannot spend the season comfortably & pleasantly — If books on all subjects can add to my happiness, they are here at my command — & if I wish for retirement that I can have by directing a fire made in the Library — as I have at this time — The children are at interesting ages, & it is amusement enough to listen to their prattle & join in their plays — James, now eight months old is one of the finest children I have ever seen, indeed there is no defect about him either in form or disposition — He is so good, & so happy, that he wins the love of all — & he is the pride of his mother's heart — Anna's health is tolerable though still suffering from the local complaint in her side — Mr Romeyn has resumed his attention to Law — & I have never known him before, so devoted to it — He is at his office early & late — He attends exclusively to Chancery business & has as much as he can do

Mr Woodruff is here — & has been quite sick — He is now about again & in quite a pleasant mood for him — but how can a man be happy who has nothing to occupy his mind! — If with all the comforts &c that I have enumerated we were but the other side of Lake Erie I should most heartily rejoice — The delay of the mails the long passage of letters &c is exceeding by vexations — & this season is perhaps more so than any other — The land mail is not yet in operation — & the Boats are few & uncertain — —

I left Buffalo on the 5th inst in the Cleveland one of the largest & fastest boats on the Lake. I should say rather, that I went on board the boat on the evening of the 5th but the weather looked so dark & stormy that we did not leave the Harbor until the morning of the 6th — It proved to be a bad day & we only reached Erie, ninety miles at evening — Left there early Thursday morning & had an extremely rough & uncomfortable passage to Fairport seventy five miles farther where we arrived middle of the afternoon. There we remained twenty four hours — another boat in at the same time lay thirty six hours — We reached Cleveland Friday evening & as the wind had somewhat abated the Captain after much hesitation concluded to come on — The night however proved to be very tempestuous & the snow fell so thick that during three hours the compass was our only guide. We at last got under the lee of an island & remained until morning — after this, our passage was pleasant & we reached Detroit at noon of Saturday. The Captain remarked that he had never had so long or so rough a passage — It was exceedingly tedious, but I had no fear th many discomforts — Mr Tracy accompanied me as far as Cleveland & afterwards came on here — — Sister Sophia arrived in B— a few days before I left & is now settled there for the winter — —

I received a letter from brother Charles of Nov 1st announcing the birth of a fine son on the 30th Oct — both Mother & child doing well — the former better than ever on a similar occasion — It was a matter of much rejoicing to the parents & C— remarked that 'Cornelia's whole soul seemed to be absorbed in him" — I am anxious to hear something later from them & I cannot account for brother G—s not alluding to them in a postscript which he added to your letter — It was written Nov 11th & he mentioned very particularly the members of his own family — & Aunt Mary — & yet not a word about Nancy &c — — Aunt M— has just left for Avon having nearly recovered her health — she visited in G—s family after her illness — I think C— must have written to you on the occasion of the birth of his son — if he had not done so before — His letters to me recently have been more frequent than usual, but it has happened so because his family have been sick & for a long time he has been unable to write —

h2m

There is very great complaint in this State of the hard times — & the currency is in a deplorable condition — There will doubtless be much less gaiety than usual — for those who have been wealthy, have nothing extra now, to waste on parties &c — There is a regiment of soldiers stationed here & at Dearborn Arsenal, ten miles in the interior for the protection of the frontier — & General Scott has lately visited this & other posts — in consequence of rumours that the patriots intended to make trouble this winter — — — There is a political revolution in this state — & Judge Woodbridge whose wife was a Trumbull — is the Whig Governor elect —

Rev. Edward Robinson D.D.
Berlin
Prussia

E.C. R.
Nov. 27. 1839
Rec'd Mar 5. 1840

When you speak of coming to London this winter it seems as if you would be comparatively very near to us — but off here in Michigan I suppose I shall hardly know of your journey until you will be back again —

My love to Theresa & Mary & Eddy — How happy the former must have been to meet again the early friend whom you mention —

Your affectionate Sister

Laura sends love to you all —

Elizabeth